
SECTION: FOOD DELIVERY SYSTEM

SUBJECT: Food Instrument Receipt and Distribution

ITEM: *Mailing Food Instruments to Participants*



Policy Local agencies are authorized to mail food instruments to participants to alleviate situational participant difficulty in obtaining the food instruments. Once the hardship is resolved, the mailing of food instruments shall be discontinued.

Local agencies that opt to mail food instruments must establish and implement a system that ensures the return of food instruments to the local agency if the participant no longer resides or receives mail at the address to which the food instruments were mailed.

Authority for policy 7CFR246.12 (r)(4)
Title 22 CCR 40749 (c)

Authorization to mail food instruments Local agencies are authorized to mail food instruments under limited circumstances when the participant does not have an available alternate, provided nutrition education contacts are not compromised and program integrity standards are maintained. Local agencies shall have food instrument mailing procedures consist of at least two separate and distinct functions performed by two different local agency staff persons.

Allowable situations for mailing include times when the participant:

- Is ill, including hospitalization of participant either before or after delivery;
- Is caring for an ill family member;
- Does not have access to transportation;

Or if the participant/alternate

- Is unable to travel safely due to severe weather or disaster; or
 - Is unable to receive food instruments because the Integrated Statewide Information System (ISIS) is not operating.
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Steps for mailing food instruments

To mail food instruments, local agency staff shall carry out the following tasks:

Steps	Description
1	Establish direct contact with the participant to confirm the reason for the inability to come to the WIC office, and to verify the participant's current address.
2	Enter an "M" in the select field of the "Prepare Family Packages" screen and choose the authorization code. This creates an automatic family comment which is inserted into ISIS and includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the last modification user,• date, and• the message "Mailed FI's" and reason for authorization..
3	Initial or sign the WIC Food Issuance Signature Log and write "mailed" next to the appropriate serial numbers.
4	Mail the food instruments using first class mail. Note: Do NOT send the WIC Authorization Folder (WAF) with food instruments in the mail. If it is necessary to mail the WAF, put it in a separate envelope so that lost or stolen food instruments may not be easily cashed. Envelopes used to mail food instruments or WAF's should be labeled, "Do Not Forward, Return to Sender."
5	If the participant does not reside or receive mail at the address on record in ISIS, the food instruments must be returned to the local agency or the State WIC Branch.

Mailed food instruments not received

If participants report that they did not receive their mailed food instruments and ask for replacement food instruments, then local agencies shall advise the participant that receiving and redeeming two sets of food instruments for the same month may result in suspension from the program. To replace undelivered mailed food instruments, the local agency shall follow the procedure outlined below.

Replacing mailed food instruments

Access the participant's information in ISIS to determine whether the mailed food instruments have been redeemed, and then use the following procedure:

Replacing mailed food instruments (cont'd)

IF the food instruments have...	THEN...
Not been redeemed and less than 5 working days have passed since the food instruments were mailed	Inform the participant that there will be a 5 working day waiting period before the food instruments can be replaced to allow sufficient delivery time.
Not been redeemed after 5 working days	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Void and replace the food instruments by using the Reason Code “VD” on the Void Food Instruments screen.2. Inform the participant that if the first food instruments arrive in the mail, they must be returned to the agency because they are invalid and cannot be cashed.3. Advise the WIC Branch Program Integrity Unit (PIU) via e-mail or in writing that mailed food instruments were not received and have been voided.
Been redeemed	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Advise the participant that the food instruments have been cashed, are assumed to have been stolen, and cannot be reissued prior to an investigation.2. Report the incident to the WIC Branch, PIU and request that PIU advise local agency staff how to proceed. <p>Note: ISIS will not void and reissue redeemed food instruments.</p>

Reference

See the ISIS Downtime Management Plan for more information.